

## Methadone detoxification regimen

Methadone detoxification needs to be distinguished from a slow reduction of methadone down to zero. In the detoxification regimen the usual preparation needs to be done and a momentum for change generated so that a drug free state is reached within 2-3 weeks.

A significant number of patients supplement their methadone prescriptions when the dose falls below 20mg daily and this holds true for either slow reduction or detoxification regimens. Thus the regime is best suited to more stable patients with positive alternatives to drug use established.

	Total daily dose of methadone	Total daily dose of methadone
	Withdrawal phase from 30mg methadone	Withdrawal phase from 20mg methadone
Day 1	26 mg	18 mg
Day 2	22 mg	16 mg
Day 3	18 mg	14 mg
Day 4	14 mg	14 mg
Day 5	12 mg	12 mg
Day 6	10 mg	10 mg
Day 7	8 mg	8 mg
Day 8	6 mg	6 mg
Day 9	4 mg	4 mg
Day 10	2 mg	2 mg
Seven days after the last dose of methadone the patient can be started on naltrexone.		

Gossop M, Griffiths P, Bradley B and Strang J (1989), 'Opiate Withdrawal Symptoms in response to 10-day and 21-day methadone withdrawal programmes', British Journal of Psychiatry, 154, 360-363.